



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In April 2003, the mild winter came to a halt and a cold, wet front settled throughout Southeast Idaho. Inclement weather halted farming activities and delayed construction projects, driving the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate up two-tenths of a percentage point to 5.2 percent from March's revised rate of 5.0 percent. The remarkable change was in the year-over-year difference. The rate fell two percentage points from the April 2002 rate of 7.2 percent. The rate reduction shows that many of the workers who lost their jobs late in 2001 and early in 2002 have found employment. In April 2003, 680 fewer individuals were unemployed than in April 2002. While the number of individuals in the *Civilian Labor Force* increased 4.5 percent over the year, the number of individuals who found employment increased at a faster rate of 6.7 percent. The *Civilian Labor Force* increased as one-income-households became two-income households because some people who lost their jobs during the economic recession could not find employment that paid enough to sustain their families and non-working spouses had to obtain employment.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs increased by 100 from March 2003 to April 2003. The increase in April 2003 was because of construction and service related activity. From April 2002, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 850. Much of the increase was in *Construction*, but significant increases occurred in *Leisure and Hospitality* and *Other Services* as winter recreation activities continued well into the month. The move of more than 400 jobs from *Health Services* to *Government Administration* was because two hospitals in Pocatello merged.

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	April 2003*	March 2003	April 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,290	41,410	39,500	-0.3	4.5
Unemployment	2,150	2,070	2,830	3.9	-24.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.2	5.0	7.2		
Total Employment	39,140	39,340	36,670	-0.5	6.7
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,930	42,210	39,780	-0.7	5.4
Unemployment	2,160	2,310	2,830	-6.5	-23.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.2	5.5	7.1		
Total Employment	39,770	39,900	36,950	-0.3	7.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	33,950	33,850	33,100	0.3	2.6
Goods-Producing Industries	4,430	4,370	4,160	1.4	6.5
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	20	0.0	-50.0
Construction	1,780	1,720	1,500	3.5	18.7
Manufacturing	2,640	2,640	2,640	0.0	0.0
Food Manufacturing	430	430	480	0.0	-10.4
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	140	130	110	7.7	27.3
Machinery Manufacturing	40	40	30	0.0	33.3
Other Manufacturing	2,030	2,040	2,020	-0.5	0.5
Service-Providing Industries	29,520	29,480	28,940	0.1	2.0
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,700	6,710	6,620	-0.1	1.2
Wholesale Trade	1,060	1,070	1,060	-0.9	0.0
Retail Trade	4,370	4,370	4,310	0.0	1.4
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,220	1,220	1,200	0.0	1.7
Information	670	680	670	-1.5	0.0
Financial Activities	1,720	1,700	1,820	1.2	-5.5
Professional & Business Services	3,400	3,360	3,400	1.2	0.0
Educational & Health Services	2,710	2,720	3,060	-0.4	-11.4
Leisure & Hospitality	3,270	3,240	3,080	0.9	6.2
Other Services	1,360	1,310	1,190	3.8	14.3
Government Education	5,510	5,610	5,530	-1.8	-0.4
Government Administration	4,180	4,150	3,570	0.7	17.1

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Bannock County

One of the highlights thus far in 2003 was increased construction activity from January through March 2003 over January through March 2002. Construction permit values, as reported in Wells Fargo Bank's Idaho Construction Report of March 2003, reached \$20 million compared to \$8 million in 2002. The largest gain, \$11,520,141, was in non-residential construction because several new businesses were completed this spring.

- American Microsystems Incorporated Semiconductor (AMIS) opened a \$4.5 million engineering and research center on Alvin

Ricken Drive in Pocatello. The 30,800-square-foot center houses approximately 180 employees and is located near the company's manufacturing facility. At the ribbon cutting and press conference for the new facility, AMIS President Christine King announced that the company plans to increase its workforce by 100 workers. Approximately 40 workers have been hired and another 40-90 workers should be hired by the end of the year.

- The U-Joint built a new \$350,000 Super Store at 215 East Cedar in Pocatello. The 7,000-square-foot facility, which opened in May, replaced the business' two smaller facilities at one location. Another 7,200-square feet of space at the new location is available for lease. The business employs 12 people.
- Bannock Animal Medical Center (BAMC) opened in Chubbuck in May. The 7,000-square-foot clinic offers the latest in-house diagnostic and treatment capabilities. BAMC is located at 5262 North Yellowstone Avenue and employs six people.
- Virginia Transformer Corporation purchased U.S. Transformer West in Pocatello. The acquisition reinstated more than 50 jobs that were lost because of the U.S. Transformer West closure. Virginia Transformer Corporation's operation in Pocatello will be known as VTCU Corporation.

Bingham County

Construction activity from January through March 2003 reached over \$11 million and exceeded January through March 2002 when it topped out at under \$5 million. The largest gain was in non-residential construction (\$7.2 million), which was more than double the value of residential construction (\$3.5 million).

- The Blackfoot Chamber held a ribbon cutting for the new Blackfoot School District Technology Center. The center is located at 555 South Broadway and provides technology resources for students, teachers, businesses, and the community. The center has a computer lab for on-site training and distance learning capabilities.
- Indian Motorcycle of Blackfoot opened at 410 South Broadway in Blackfoot. The business sells custom made and painted American Performance Cycles and Indian Motorcycles. In addition to the showroom and sales facility the business includes a service center and waiting area, and a camping and picnic area for motorcycle travelers.

- A new business, Hook-N-Up, opened at 69 South Broadway in Blackfoot. The unique business sells cellular phones, accessories, and service; serves as a payment center for Qwest and Teton Wireless; sells and rents bottled water and water coolers; sells bulk coffee; and sells specialty coffee drinks, soft drinks, and morning toast.
- Site preparation work began in May on the new Mountain River Medical Clinic Birthing and Surgical Center. The new medical center will be located on North Meridian Street in Blackfoot.
- The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes broke ground on a new commodity storage building. The 8,990-square-foot building will include a conference room and kitchen area for cooking demonstrations, an office, and storage space. The \$248,000 facility should be complete by mid-July.

Franklin County

Construction activity from January through March 2003 reached just over \$2 million and fell from January through March 2002 when it was near \$8 million. Residential construction gained more the \$700,000 over last year, but non-residential construction was down nearly \$300,000 from last year.

Caribou County – Bear Lake County – Power County

Construction projects in Power County, Soda Springs City, and Bear Lake City from January through March 2003, as reported by Wells Fargo's Idaho Construction Report, fell from the same period in 2002. Power County dropped from over \$600,000 in 2002 to just \$34,000 in 2003. Montpelier City fell from \$60,000 in nonresidential construction last year to no construction activity in 2003. Soda Springs City fell from \$85,000 in 2002 to \$2,600 in 2003. Despite the reductions in construction, each of the counties and cities are undergoing downtown revitalization projects, and community/economic developers are aggressively pursuing new business and tourism to boost their rural economies.

Shelley Allen, Regional Labor Economist
430 N. 5th Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83205
(208) 236-6710, ext. 3713
E-mail: sallen@jobservice.us